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Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (currently amended) --A An automated process for competitive bidding comprising:

downloading into a computer a request for goods and/or services, said request defining a bid package;

automatically sequestering said bid package into a plurality of modules, wherein a module constitutes a portion of said bid package;

automatically further sequestering the plurality of modules into in-house and at least one outsourced module, whereby an in-house module receives an in-house bid;

automatically searching for potential suppliers for the at least one outsourced module;

automatically prequalifying the potential suppliers by a plurality of factors that generate a statistical weight to each potential supplier;

automatically selecting a set of prequalified potential suppliers based on the statistical weight attached to each potential supplier;

automatically distributing the at least one outsourced modules to each prequalified potential supplier within the set, for at least one outsourced bid,

wherein said distributing step further includes:

further sequestering the at least one outsourced modules into competitive and non-competitive modules;

releasing the competitive modules for competitive bids;

retaining the non-competitive modules for non-competitive bids; and

receiving said at least one outsourced bid, including competitive and non-competitive bids for competitive and non-competitive outsourced modules;

automatically preparing a bid from the combining of said in-house bid and all said outsourced bids, wherein each said in-house and outsourced bid has a monetary component and a non-monetary component, and each said in-house and outsourced bid is represented by a numerical value;

automatically presenting the bid as well as any additive alternatives or deductive alternatives;

automatically reporting the bid in a plurality of formats; and

automatically transmitting the bid to a sequential buyer;

wherein all said automatic steps are performed by a computer.

Claim 6 (original) – The process of claim 5 wherein the step of preparing the bid package further includes:

aggregating said competitive and non-competitive bids into the bid.

Claim 7 (original) – The process of claim 6 wherein the process is repeated until a final bid is aggregated from all of the bids.

Claim 8 (withdrawn) – A process for competitive bidding comprising:

dividing a project into a plurality of modules which constitute portions of a project;

whereby for each module, at least one  $N$  tier buyer, where  $N$  is greater than or equal to zero, may choose at least one of:

a) keeping said module, thus making an in-house bid for said module;

b) outsourcing said module to be competitively bidded at an  $N + 1$  tier, thus having a competitive bid for said module; or

c) outsourcing said module to an  $N + P$  tier, where  $P$  is greater than zero and the sum of  $N + P$  is greater than or equal to the sum of  $N + 1$ , thus having an outsourced bid for said module.

Claim 9 (withdrawn) – The process of claim 8 wherein steps (a), (b) or (c) are repeated until all of the modules have bids attached to them.

Claim 10 (withdrawn) – The process of claim 9 further including the step of:

collecting the in-house, competitive and outsourced bids for each module.

Claim 11 (withdrawn) – The process of claim 10 further including the step of:

presenting a bid to the at least one  $N$  tier buyer.

Claim 12 (cancelled)

Claim 13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (cancelled)

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (cancelled)

Claim 18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (withdrawn) – A system of qualifying suppliers for a project to be competitively bidden:

means for containing a set of criteria;

means for comparing a potential supplier to the set;

means for assessing a statistical weight to each potential supplier based on the comparison to the set of criteria; and

means for sequestering those potential suppliers that at least meet a threshold statistical weight representing minimum requirements of said set of criteria into a suppliers set.

Claim 21 (withdrawn) – A system for the elimination of an increase in price without added value for at least one good or service being provided by a pass-through supplier comprising:

means to permit a user to search for a source supplier for the good or service; and

means to permit the user to go directly to the source of the good or service, instead of the pass-through supplier, whereby pass-through price increases are not assessed.

Claim 22 (withdrawn) – A competitive bidding system comprising:

means to confirm a buyer or seller is a registered entity with the system, wherein registration is a confirmation of said buyer's or said seller's identity;

means to verify payments are in place for the registered entity's requested service;

means to check that the system can provide the requested service in the desired geographical region;

means to confirm all languages needed to complete the requested service are available; and

means to verify all information to release the requested service is present.

Claim 23 (withdrawn) – The competitive bidding system of claim 22 further comprising:

means for security whereby for a given requested service buyers can access more information than sellers.

Claim 24 (withdrawn) – The competitive bidding system of claim 23 wherein the information at least includes: open and closing dates for bids and any addendums.

Claim 25 (withdrawn) – A needs assessment, resource management, procurement and contracts management system comprising, in combination:

a means to assess at least one end user need;

a means to manage resources for facilitating fulfillment of the end user need;

a means to procure at least one of goods and services from the resources by outsourcing to a third party to fulfill the end user need; and

a means to manage at least one contract between the resources used to procure said at least one of goods and services and the end user need.

Claim 26 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 25 wherein said means to assess includes:

means for providing preliminary research for designing, installation, cost estimates, and funding requests in place;

means to create a bid package from the end user need and research.

Claim 27 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 26 wherein said means for providing preliminary research includes:

means for requisitioning multiple suppliers through a group of related documents, associated files, scripts and databases that is served up by a server on a wide area network.

Claim 28 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 27 wherein said means for requisitioning uses a means for statistical data management.

Claim 29 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 25 wherein said means to manage resources includes:

means to register procurement requests at a server on a wide area network;

means for requisitioning multiple suppliers through a group of related documents, associated files, scripts and databases that is served up by a server on a wide area network;

means to review and assess procurement;

means to screen and categorize potential suppliers;

means to prequalify potential suppliers with at least one of prior course of dealings and weighted score; and

means to distribute a bid package to said screened and prequalified suppliers.

Claim 30 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 29 wherein said means to procure includes:

a competitive bidding process.

Claim 31 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 30 wherein said means to manage contract includes:

means for detailed bid evaluation for a responsive and responsible bid;

means for contract negotiations and agreements;

means to issue contracts or purchase order;

means to schedule delivery of product and monitor progress of payments;

means to finalize delivery of product or service, closure items and final payments.

means to provide statistical data management.

Claim 32 (withdrawn) – An automated process for procurement and resource management comprising:

outsourcing by requisitioning at least one of goods and services from searching multiple industries or market sectors;

composing a bid package from the information gleaned;

generating a contract or purchase order between a buyer and a seller from the bid package;

processing payment between the buyer and the seller; and

managing the delivery schedule for the goods or services between the buyer and seller.

Claim 33 (withdrawn) – A system to manage automated processes for procurement and resource management, comprising:

creating generic web sites that invoke a specific category of buyers based on a common attribute;

creating buyer specific web sites that invoke a specific category of buyers based on a common attribute; and

creating seller specific web sites that invoke a specific category of sellers based on a common attribute; wherein all web sites are arranged so that the web sites are standardized for content and presentation at a basic level and further modified to serve at least one specific attribute of at least one industry, whereby buyers and sellers are grouped according to specific categories and all web sites are keyed to access to said specific categories.



Claim 34 (withdrawn) – A system for providing the appearance of direct transactions between buyers and sellers comprising:

means to provide the appearance that a buyer at a website conducts a transaction directly with a seller at another website, said direct transaction conduction including means to obscure the existence of a non-direct party;

means to provide the appearance that a buyer at a website conducts a transaction directly with a plurality of sellers, wherein each seller is at a different website;

means to provide the appearance that a seller at a website conducts a transaction directly with a plurality of buyers, wherein each buyer is at a different website; and

means to provide the appearance that an ultimate buyer at a website conducts a transaction directly with an ultimate seller at another website through at least one intermediary seller and at least one intermediary buyer, wherein each intermediary seller and intermediary buyer are either at different websites or the same website.

Claim 35 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 34 further comprising:

means to provide the appearance that a buyer at a website is conducting a multiple tiered transactions with sellers at different websites, wherein the sellers become next lower level buyers for other seller at other different websites; and

wherein a transaction can be sequestered into a plurality of smaller transactions for several different sellers at several different websites.

Claim 36 (withdrawn) – The system of claim 35 further comprising:

means to provide the appearance that at least one buyer and seller are conducting a transaction with a central website.

Claim 37 (cancelled)